

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART



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CATALOGUE
OF
THE AIRTHREY TREASURES

Formerly the Property of the late

DONALD GRAHAM
of Airthrey Castle, Bridge of Allan

AND NOW TO BE SOLD ENTIRELY WITHOUT RESERVE
BY ORDER OF THE PRESENT JOINT OWNERS

COMPRISING

A SUPERB RENAISSANCE GOLD GLOBE CUP
PROBABLY BY JERONIMUS PETREI OF NUREMBERG

TWO VERY FINE MOTHER-O'-PEARL SILVER-MOUNTED DISHES,
Netherlands, circa 1600

A TIGERWARE JUG WITH SILVER MOUNTS
BY THOMAS MATTHEW, *Barnstaple, circa 1570*

A MAGNIFICENT SILVER-GILT CHALICE, *The Hague, 1660*

A LARGE AGATE CASKET ; A BRONZE-GILT HORSE ;
AND A COPPER-GILT CUP AND COVER

WHICH WILL BE SOLD BY AUCTION

BY MESSRS

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The Objects here catalogued were collected by the late Donald Graham of Airthrey Castle, Bridge of Allan, over a period of years during the second half of the nineteenth century.

They are being sold without reserve by order of the present joint owners :

MR. A. F. GRAHAM WATSON
MRS. WESCOTT
COMMANDER G. E. P. HOW, R.N.
MRS. G. E. P. HOW
MRS. H. A. TROTTER
MISS J. P. BENSON.

NOTE—*We are instructed by the owners to say
that all the lots in this catalogue are to
be sold by auction and that no private
offers before the sale will be accepted.*

SOTHEBY & Co. April, 1937.





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CATALOGUE
OF
THE AIRTHREY TREASURES

DAY OF SALE
Thursday, June 10th, 1937
at 2.30 p.m. precisely

LOT 1
THE
SUPERB RENAISSANCE GOLD GLOBE CUP
circa 1555-1565

(With this lot is included a copy of the second edition [1537] of Simon Grynaeus's "Novus Orbis" in which is bound an exact copy of the map on the globe with minor modifications described later.)

This unique example of Renaissance work is probably the finest and most beautiful example of 16th Century secular gold work in existence today. It was most fully illustrated and described in *The Connoisseur* for July, 1936. The only object in any way comparable at present recorded is the Pierpont Morgan celestial globe, at present tentatively ascribed to Urban Schneeweis of Dresden, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Certain similarities exist between these two cups, the globes being fashioned in the same way, and the carat and alloy employed being practically identical. Similar cracks, which will be referred to later, appear in the low relief of the base of both cups, and the head of Jupiter surmounting the Airthrey Cup and that of Neptune in the Morgan Globe are almost identical. The Airthrey

Gold Globe cup, however, is unquestionably considerably earlier in date, finer in design and more perfectly executed than the Morgan Cup, and the engraving of the terrestrial globe of the Airthrey Cup is far finer than the engraving of the celestial globe of the Morgan Cup. The Airthrey Cup is very slightly smaller than the Morgan, the dimensions of the Airthrey Cup being:—*height* 8 inches, *diameter of bowl* $3\frac{1}{8}$ inches, *weight* 8 oz. 14 dwt., those of the Morgan being *height* $9\frac{1}{4}$ inches, *diameter of bowl* $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

The Airthrey Globe consists of a terrestrial globe divided at the Equator into two halves—the upper hemisphere, surmounted by a small figure of Jupiter with thunderbolt and eagle attributes, forming the cover. The lower half is supported upon the crowned head of Neptune poised, trident in hand, upon the back of a sea-horse. The upper flat surface of the base of the Cup about the sea-horse is embossed and chased into the semblance of a sea, in which mermaids and dolphins are represented swimming. A narrow wreath of laurel with six classical masks set at regular intervals surrounds the “sea”. Below this, the domed foot is embossed in low relief and chased with a frieze representing Adam and Eve naming the Beasts in the Garden of Eden.

In the absence of any history we must look to the Airthrey Cup itself in the hope that details of its construction and ornament may assist us to solve the problem of its date, its origin and its maker. The map engraved upon the globe which forms the upper part of the Cup, is that which Nordenskiöld asserts was engraved for Simon Grynaeus’s “Novus Orbis”, first published at Basle in 1532, with, however, certain minor alterations and omissions made necessary by the transformation of the original two-dimensional chart into a three-dimensional globe.





Photo : of map bound in Copy of Simon Grynaeus's "Novus Orbis". Sold with Gold Cup



Mark on rim of the lower half of the Globe



The Temptation of Eve by Satan in the Garden of Eden

Grynaeus's map is furnished with two descriptive tabulae engraved in the Indian and Pacific Oceans and bordered with figures of various animals, monsters and cannibals, and spice and other trees. The reproduction on the Cup lacks these tabulae, the elephant and the two winged serpents from the border of the original map being substituted for them. The labels containing the Latin names of the winds which appear round the edge of the original map have also been brought together to form a double line of labels on either side of the 260th meridian of longitude, which forms the edge of the original map. Grynaeus's map was also used to illustrate some copies of Fernando Cortez's "*De Insulis nuper inventis narrationes*" published at Cologne, likewise in 1532. These circumstances would at first sight seem to provide a terminus a quo of 1532 for the Airthrey Cup. Stylistically, however, the Cup must be pronounced as belonging to the commencement of the second half of the sixteenth century.

On the authority of a passage on the title page of the "*Novus Orbis*" this map has been ascribed to the cartographer Sebastian Munster. Whether the designer of the map or not—and most authorities believe he was not—he certainly never engraved it. It may, however, be ascribed on technical grounds to the school of the Basle engravers responsible for, among others, the map in the "*Ptolemaeus*", printed in Basle in 1540, where the cannibals' wigwam (reversed) from the border of the "*Novus Orbis*" map appears together with one of the two dolphins (reversed).

Though it by no means follows that a Globe Cup was made contemporaneously or nearly contemporaneously with the map which is engraved upon it—for example, a silver globe cup date 1569 in the

British Museum is engraved with a map produced by Oronce Finé at Lyons in 1531—it can in general be accepted that a map would not be used upon an object such as the present Cup produced more than a decade after the latest publication of the original chart. Indeed, there is evidence that only the latest maps were used or that when old ones were employed the engraver modified them according to the most recent geographical knowledge. On this evidence, and that afforded by the fashion of the Cup itself, we may safely date it between 1555 and 1565, possibly it may prove to be even a little earlier.

The engraver of the globe of the Cup may conceivably have been the craftsman who fashioned the Cup itself, but this is very unlikely. Judging by seventeenth century examples—the only ones of which all the particulars relating to their making are known—collaboration seems regularly to have existed between the goldsmiths responsible for the cups, and engravers expert in map drawing.

Up to the present it has proved impossible to trace the engraving—if one existed—on which the frieze round the foot of the Cup is based. It is, however, possible to point with certainty to the individual indirectly responsible for this design. The Nuremberg artist, Virgil Solis, was a past master at designing similar friezes containing large numbers of animals broken up into panels by the vertical trunks of trees. Generally they take the form of hunting scenes, but others merely consist of groups of animals—hedgehogs, reindeer, monkeys, goats, elephants, hippopotami and lions.

Apart from the stylistic parallel afforded by these friezes, an even closer resemblance is to be perceived in Solis's Eden panels, of which a representative number are in the British Museum, and he is known

to have designed one Cup, the stem of which was formed as a serpent-entwined tree with Adam and Eve on either side of it.

On general grounds the Airthrey Cup may be ascribed to the School of that other Nuremberg master-craftsman, Wentzel Jamnitzer (1508-1585), whose "Kunstbuch", wherein many close parallels to details on the Airthrey Cup may be found, was published in 1551, and all the evidence which we possess warrants the belief that it is of South German make, with the balance markedly in favour of Nuremberg as its place of origin.

With regard to the maker of the Morgan Cup, this bears a series of marks none of which have so far been identified with any degree of certainty, though it has been suggested, as previously stated, that one of them may be that of Urban Schneeweis. It is however, though considerably later in date, unquestionably from the same school as the Airthrey Cup.

With regard to the maker of the Airthrey Cup—all we know is that his punch was formed of the letters I.P., presumably the initials of his name. But we are entitled to assume that he was a goldsmith of substance—one who, when this Cup was made, had been long practising his craft and probably a man who enjoyed a considerable contemporary repute. The workmanship proves him to have been but little inferior, if not equal, in technical skill to Wentzel Jamnitzer himself and the Adam and Eve frieze reveals that he was accustomed to working in miniature and suggests the hand not so much of a goldsmith as of a gem-cutter, die-sinker and medallist, a not uncommon combination. The same conclusion seems to have been reached by Kris and von Falke, when discussing a medallion in the Bavarian National Museum, which displays an almost identical technique.

As previously stated, the technique employed suggests either a gem-cutter or seal cutter as well as a goldsmith, and among the half-dozen or so Nuremberg goldsmiths living in the second half of the sixteenth century whose initials are I.P.—the I being understood to cover both J and Hans (the diminutive of Johann)—only one is recorded to have combined these two avocations. This craftsman was Jeronimus Petrei or Petri, whose name occurs—also in the form of Petreïussen, or Petern—in the “Ratsverlasse” and the “Goldschmiede-Verzeichnis”, between 1530 and 1569. He had originally been a girdle-maker, but in 1530 he changed his calling to that of seal-cutter. On October 2nd, 1540, he paid for the Freedom of the City of Nuremberg. He died apparently in 1569, leaving a widow Catharina.

There is only one serious objection to this identification. Rosenberg has identified Petri's mark with a circular punch containing the letters G.P. which he assumed stood for Gronymus Petri. But the “Ratsverlasse”, which may be taken as authoritative, always gives the spelling as either Jeronymus or Jheronymus. The only I.P. Nuremberg mark known to Rosenberg is tentatively ascribed by him to Jacob Peltz, who became a master in 1562 and died in 1590, an individual who seemingly corresponds in no way to the craftsman postulated earlier, and who is in any case too late.

For whom this princely Cup can have been made must, for the time being, remain a mystery which only the discovery of a more or less detailed description of it in some contemporary inventory will solve. In the middle and second half of the sixteenth century the production of these pocula cosmographia would seem to have been in response to a demand most pronounced in Switzerland and

Southern Germany. Their construction was not, however, limited to that region, and by the close of the century the leadership in this particular branch of the goldsmith's craft was passing to the Netherlands. It is a Cup that a Prince of the Empire might have owned. And bearing in mind the very generous patronage extended by the Wittelsbachs to the goldsmiths of Nuremberg, it would seem not improbable that this Cup was made for some member of the Reigning House of Bavaria.

With regard to the actual metal of which the Airthrey Cup is fashioned :—This Cup was assayed by the Assay Hall Glasgow and where the metal has been scraped for this purpose on the inside edge of the gold globe, can be seen the true copper colour of the metal. An expert metallurgist has also tested various other portions of the Cup by touchstone and acids. The gold globe Cup itself is between 20 and 22 carat, the cast figures and the rim of the foot, though of the same alloy as the globe, have slightly more copper and are just below the 20 carat standard. The Cup at the time it was made has been washed with acid to remove the alloy from the surface and leave as near as possible a "skin" of pure gold.

A large number of small fractures occur in the low-relief of the frieze of the foot. Similar fractures occur in the foot of the Morgan Cup. It is of great interest that in neither Cup is there a single case of fracturing of high-relief, consequently they cannot have been caused by ordinary "wear and tear"—that is to say rubbing, cleaning and handling. They in no way resemble cracks or damage in early silver

work, nor can they be due to oxydisation. A report made by the Research Laboratory of the British Museum states:

“From a careful and detailed examination of the cracks in the gold work submitted, I am convinced that they have arisen through deformations of the metal at a period when it became crystalline and, in consequence, brittle—i.e., perhaps upwards of 100 years after manufacture.”

It would appear that this particular form of cracking, which has also been noted in other early high-carat gold, is due to the presence of pure copper in the alloy. Had the gold been alloyed with silver this cracking would not have occurred.

(*See* FRONTISPIECE AND ILLUSTRATION)



LOT 2

**SUPERB MOTHER-O'-PEARL DISH
WITH SILVER MOUNTS**

Brussels or The Hague,
circa 1590-1620

Of exceptional size and quality, the bowl of the dish is built up of shield-shaped plaques of mother-o'-pearl, surrounded by a broad row of radiating rectangular plaques. The wide silver border is embossed and chased with six panels containing scenes depicting revels between Nymphs and Fauns. The panels are separated alternately by classical masks and festoons of drapery. The "print" depicts a group of half-draped male and female classical figures in a wooded landscape, in the manner of the South German artists of about 1580-1590.

Diameter, 26½ inches.

Marks, a Crowned Lion in a Shield; others unidentified, including a maker's mark clearly repeated on the "print".

This dish is believed to be the largest and finest example of this particular type of work known. It is, moreover, interesting in the many affinities it displays to the work of the later Jamnitzers and their immediate followers in Southern Germany.

* * Mother-o'-pearl or "nacre" (an Arabian word borrowed by the French) is defined as "the lining of various shells"; the material

used here being probably *Trochus Niloticus* or *Haliotis Iris*. Mother-o'-pearl was imported into Europe from Ceylon and the Persian Gulf, the outer layers being removed when it was used for decorative purposes.

Both in the Gothic and Baroque periods Dutch craftsmen were fond of this beautiful material, and Holland has always been famous for these large dishes and platters which illustrate the simplest method of using it, namely by pegging small plaques to a wooden ground. Two of their great masters were Dirk van Rijswijk and Jan Visser.

Examples of this technique may be seen on a casket made in 1554 for Duke Albrecht of Prussia in the Hohenzollern Museum, Berlin, and a chess board by the master F.W. in the Munich National Museum.

(See ILLUSTRATION)



LOT 3

SMALL MOTHER-O'-PEARL DISH
WITH SILVER MOUNTSLow Countries,
circa 1590-1615

This dish is built up of pentagonal mother-o'-pearl plaques with a wide silver border and a central print embossed and chased with hunting scenes, the figures being in the late sixteenth century German costumes. The outermost moulded margin is embellished with six cherubs' heads, cast, chased, and soldered on.

Diameter, $10\frac{3}{4}$ inches.

Marks, two—unidentified.

The decorations on this dish are evidently based on the hunting scenes of Johannes Stradanus. In a number of instances the figures of both huntsmen and beasts are easily identifiable. The artist has, however, habited the human figures in the clothing of his own period instead of the somewhat uninteresting Italianate and classically-inspired costumes of his original. It would appear probable, therefore, that his models were one of the numerous sets of plates engraved after Stradanus in Germany and the Low Countries, in the late sixteenth century. So far it has proved impossible to trace these plates, but that they existed is proved by the well-known silver-gilt Oval Dish made by Elias Geyer (1572-1634) of Leipsic, between 1611 and 1613, now in the Green Vaults at Dresden. (Richard Graul, "Alte Leipsiger Goldschmiede Arbeiten", 1916, pl. xxlv; Burlington Magazine, vol. XI (1907), pl. op. p. 194). Thereon certain of the scenes are exact duplicates of those on the present dish, with, however, their relative positions often altered.

(See ILLUSTRATION)

LOT 4

A LARGE AGATE CASKET

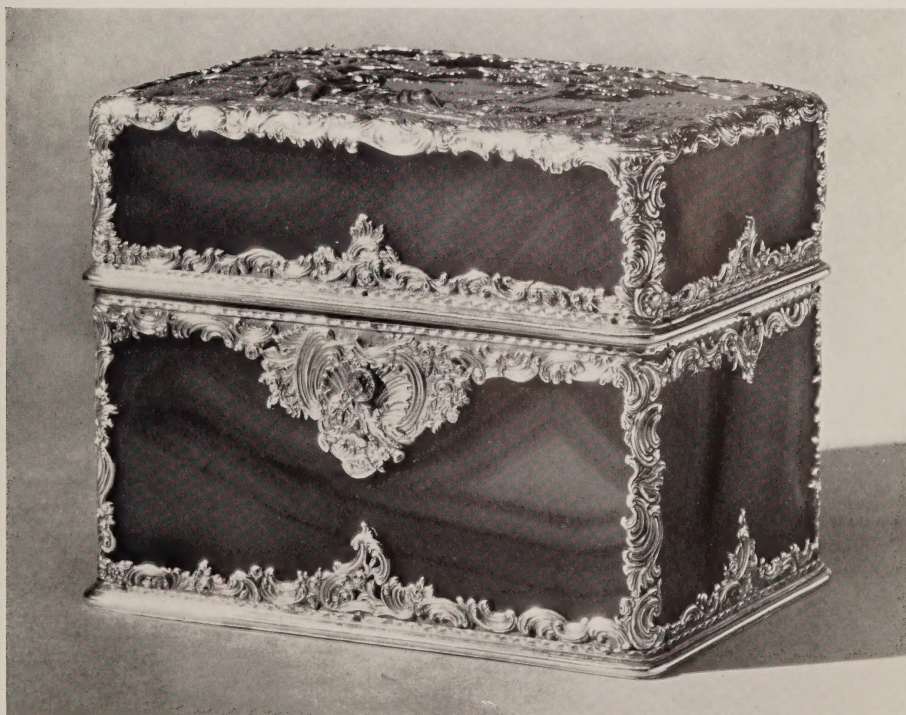
Probably French,
circa 1730-1760

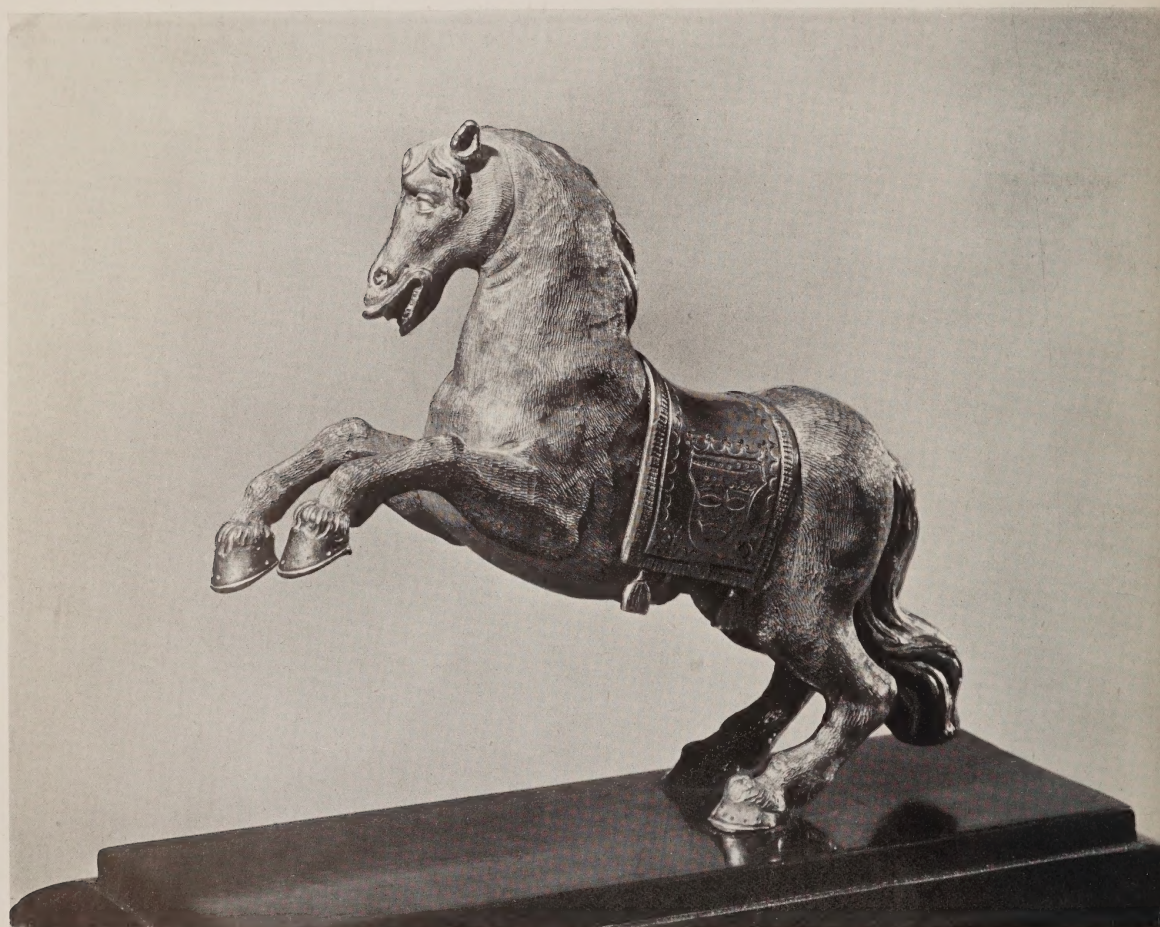
Of outstanding quality, mounted in gold with a diamond-mounted catch. In general style, it seems characteristically French, but certain points with regard to the workmanship, and the marks which are unrecorded, suggest that it may possibly be Viennese. The decoration is typical of the period 1730-1760. The artist has utilised the striation of the agate to form a "sunset" for his mural scene in gold.

(See ILLUSTRATION)



Detail of Lid





LOT 5

FINE QUALITY BRONZE-GILT HORSE

Probably North German,
late Sixteenth Century

The horse leaping, with flowing mane and tail, the body finely modelled and tooled to represent hide.

Over the back is a rectangular saddle-cloth with tassels at each corner and charged on the sides with shields bearing the Lion and Axe of Norway, and the Three Crowns of Sweden.

Judged by its approximate period and the heraldry, the horse was probably at one time surmounted by a figure of Eric XIV of Sweden.

(See ILLUSTRATION)

LOT 6

SUPERB SILVER-GILT CHALICE*bearing the Arms of Baron Wuytiers of Utrecht***Apparently The Hague, 1660****Height**, 12 inches.**Weight**, 35 ounces.**Marks**, difficult to decipher on edge of foot, apparently X date letter for 1660.

The bowl is embossed with winged cherubs against a ground of vine tendrils; two of them bear ribands engraved with "Genes 14" and "Exod 25". Below are two depressed knops embossed with chased foliage, with between them a spirally-fluted pear-shaped knop springing from acanthus leaves. The base is deeply embossed with the emblems of the Four Evangelists posed against a mound encircled by vine tendrils. The Eagle and Angel (here a naked cherub) support a scroll engraved with "HOI (*for* HOC) EST CALIX SANGVINIS MEI." The winged Bull and Lion support an open book with the words "HOC CORPVS EST ENIM MEVM." Above is an oval plaque bearing the impaled Arms of Baron Wuytiers of Utrecht.

This was probably a "Marriage" Chalice and though ecclesiastical in design may quite possibly have been used for secular purposes at that date.

(*See* ILLUSTRATION)





LOT 7

COPPER-GILT CUP AND COVER

circa 1590

This very fine example of copper-gilt was originally fashioned to hold a coconut or ostrich egg-bowl.

The bowl has, however, been replaced towards the end of the eighteenth century with a silver bowl, engraved with the arms of the Duke of Clarence (brother of George IV) or one of his younger brothers.

(See ILLUSTRATION)

LOT 8

TIGERWARE JUG

by Thomas Matthew, Barnstaple,
circa 1570

With superb silver-gilt mounts, chased and engraved with hunting scenes upon a matted ground. It is believed to be the only known Elizabethan mounted jug incorporating a hunting frieze. The maker of the mounts, Thomas Matthew, was one of the greatest of the West Country goldsmiths. He is well represented in West Country Churches, where he replaced in the time of Elizabeth a large number of old chalices with the "new" style Communion Cups. He also made a number of extremely fine spoons.

The small finial on the cover is a replacement.

(See ILLUSTRATION)



SOTHEY & Co.'s

SALE OF

THE AIRTHREY TREASURES

10th June, 1937

PRICES AND BUYERS' NAMES

LOT		£	s.	d.	LOT		£	s.	d.
1	Benson, Major Rex	1,700	0	0	5	Apslund	20	0	0
2	Benson, Miss ..	160	0	0	6	Black, D.	30	0	0
3	Valentine, Lady Freda	45	0	0	7	Blairman	21	0	0
4	Berry	100	0	0	8	Banks, Miss ..	300	0	0
					Total of Sale ..	£2,376	0	0	

